Concerning Taraaweeh…

Fatawaa

by

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Sheikh Abdul-Azeez bin Baaz

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Publisher's Note

All praises are for Allah who, out of His infinite Mercy, has given us countless opportunities to remit our pasts sins, draw near to Him, and seek the reward that He has reserved for the believers.

And may His Peace and Blessings be on His Messenger, our Imaam, who showed us every way possible to draw near to Allah and al-Jannah without any shortcoming, and upon all his family and companions, and whoever treads their path until the Day of Recompense.

Indeed one of the greatest opportunities Allah ﷻ has given this ummah is the month of Ramadaan, in which He revealed His Book as a Guidance and Criterion, and has attributed to this month many merits not attributed to others.

And from these opportunities is also the Taraaweeh, of which the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever stands [in prayer] in Ramadaan with Eeman and hoping to attain reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven."

Truly in praying Taraaweeh, the servant feels khushoo' and rejuvenates his Eeman, drawing him nearer and nearer to Allah. But what is so unfortunate is that instead of the prayer being utilized in this fashion, it sometimes is made a tedious chore where one does not feel khushoo', but rather looks forward to its conclusion.

Also, due to a lack of understanding of what is permissible in the Taraaweeh and what is not, the prayer may even become a matter

of tension; differences become apparent and views are expressed. Pe sonal ideologies start to interfere with the general benefit of the people, and thus, the whole purpose of the prayer is destroyed.

So we deemed it to be in best interest to publish this small but extremely beneficial treatise, a series of fataawah by our late beloved sheikh, Sheikh Abdul-Azeez bin Baaz, may Allah raise him amongst the prophets and righteous. This treatise clearly demonstrates his wisdom in dealing with affairs which may be points of dispute in the Taraaweeh. He sheds light upon many issues in respect to their permissibility, and one may even find that some issues have much more flexibility than is perceived.

We request all who read this book to study its meanings well and put them into practice, leaving behind any misconceptions they may have had about this blessed prayer in this blessed month, hoping that we can gain the fullest out of it, and Ramadaan be what it was intended to be, a month to remit our sins and achieve the station of Taqwa.

As for the translation, minor changes have been made to the text, as in addition or omission of words and changing sentence structure, in order to clarify what was meant by the author. Arabic words have also been retained and their meanings explained in footnotes so that the reader may become accustomed to using these words instead of their English counterparts. May Allah reward all those who assisted in the production of this work and help us to produce more of its kind.

Contents

1. What number of raka'aat[1] does the Taraaweeh[2] prayer consist of? Does it have a specific number? What number of raka'aat is best?

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. All Praise is due to Allah, and may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Allah's Messenger, and upon his family, companions, and whoever follows his guidance.

What has authentically been reported of the Prophet ﷺ suggests that there is much flexibility with respect to the number of raka'aat in the salaat al-layl (the night prayer), and they are not restricted to a certain number. However, it is the Sunnah[3] that the believer, male and female, pray in pairs of two, making tasleem[4] at the end of every two [raka'aat].

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[1] The word rak'ah (رَكْعَةٌ) is a derivative of the word rukoo' (رُكُوْعٌ), which literally means to bend, as one bends or hunches as one ages. [Adapted from the books 'Mufradaat Alfaadh il-Qur'aan' by ar-Raaghib al-Asfahaani, and 'Qaamoos al-Muheet' by al-Fayruzabaadi] In fiqh (فِقْهٌ), which is a branch of knowledge that deals with the derivation of specific rulings in the religion from its evidences, rak'ah is a word that denotes the cycle of standing along with the recitiation of Surah al-Faatihah, bowing, and two prostrations. Each cycle denotes one rak'ah, so the fajr prayer has two raka'aat (رَكَعَاتٌ), its plural, or cycles of standing, bowing, and prostrations. As for the word rukoo', it is the specific act of bowing after the standing and before the prostrations.

[2] Taraaweeh (تَرَاوِيْحٌ) is the plural of the word tarweehah (تَرْوِيْحَةٌ), which means to give a short period of rest. It was so termed because when the Sahaabah would pray Qiyaam ul-layl in congregation, they would rest between every four raka'aat. ['Fath al-Baari', v4, 250]

[3] The word sunnah (سُنَّةٌ) literally means a path or way, and the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, is that path which he sought and took.

[4] The word tasleem (تَسْلِيْمٌ) linguistlically is the verbal noun of the verb sallama (سَلَّمَ), which means to say 'As-Salaamu alaykum' (السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ). Its meaning in fiqh is ending the prayer with its pronouncement.

Amongst these ahaadeeth[5] is one which has been reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.[6] In this hadeeth of ibn 'Umar ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Salaat al-layl is in pairs of two; whosoever amongst you fears the break of dawn let him pray one rak'ah, for it will be a witr[7] for all the raka'aat he has previously offered."

His ﷺ saying, "Salaat al-layl is in pairs of two," is a declarative statement but has the implication [in usool al-fiqh[8]] of a command; it is equivalent to his ﷺ saying, "Pray in the night in pairs of two."[9]

What is intended here by praying in pairs of two is that the

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[5] Ahaadeeth (أَحَادِيْث) is the plural of the word hadeeth (حَدِيْث), which linguistically means speech. In religious terms it is a narration of anything attributed to the Prophet ﷺ whether it be his actions, statements, affirmations, or attributes.

[6] Bukhari and Muslim, the two most authentic books of hadeeth, and the only two books of the six most common books of hadeeth, al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daawud, an-Nasaa'i, ibn Maajah, and at-Tirmidhi, in which the authors, Muhammad bin Isma'eel al-Bukhari and Muslim bin Hajjaaj an-Nisapuri, intended to include only the most authentic of ahaadeeth.

[7] The word witr (وِتْر), also pronounced watr, literally means an odd number, and in fiqh terminology, it is the prayer with an odd number of raka'aat preferredly offerred as the last prayer of the night.

[8] Usool al-fiqh (أُصُوْلُ الْفِقْه), or principles of jurisprudence, is the branch of knowledge which deals with the derivation of general principles used to deduce specific rulings from its evidences.

[9] In the Qur'aan and the Sunnah, a command is not only implied in an imperative clause, as in, "Do this or that," but can also be implied in a declarative clause, as Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan,

﴿وَ الْمُطَلَّقَـٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَـٰثَةَ قُرُوْءٍ﴾

"And the divorced women shall wait for three menstrual periods."

[Surah al-Baqarah(2):228]

This is a declarative statement, but has the implication of a command.

tasleem is to be pronounced after every two raka'aat. Then, the prayer is to be concluded by performing one rak'ah, which is known as the witr prayer. This is how the Prophet ﷺ used to perform his prayer. He ﷺ would pray in the night in pairs of two, and then pray one rak'ah of witr, as was described in different narrations by 'Aa'ishah, ibn 'Abbaas, as well as other Sahaabah,[10] may Allah be pleased with them all. 'Aa'ishah ﵂ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would perform ten raka'aat of prayer, pronouncing the tasleem after every two. He would then perform one rak'ah of witr."[11]

And she ﵂ also said, "The Prophet ﷺ would not increase the number of raka'aat in the night prayer more than eleven, neither in Ramadaan[12] nor in any other month. He would pray four raka'aat, let alone their excellency and their length, then he would pray another four, let alone their excellency and their length, and then he would pray three..." [al-Bukhari and Muslim]

Some people have mistakenly presumed that these four raka'aat are to be performed with one tasleem, but this is not correct. What is meant here is that the Prophet ﷺ would conclude the prayer by pronouncing the tasleem after every two raka'aat, as is mentioned in the previous hadeeth as well as in his ﷺ saying, "The night prayer is in pairs of two." Another evidence is what has been authentically reported by al-Bukhari on the authority of ibn 'Abbaas, that the Prophet ﷺ used to pronounce the tasleem after every two raka'aat.

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[10] The word sahaabah (صَحَابَةٌ) is the plural of saahib (صَاحِبٌ), and denotes those who saw the Prophet ﷺ whilst being Muslim, and also died upon Islam. Its singular form is also sahaabi (صَحَابِيٌّ), and the sahaabiyyaat (صَحَابِيَّاتٌ)are the women companions.

[11] Also on the authority of ibn 'Umar ﵁ who said, "The Prophet ﷺ would pray in the night in pairs of two, and then offer witr with one rak'ah." [al-Bukhari, Muslim]

[12] Ramadaan is the month in which the Qur'aan was revealed, and in it is prescribed for the believers to fast.

In ‘Aai’shah’s ؓ statement there is an evidence that it is preferred in the night prayer, whether it be in Ramadaan or in any other month, that one performs eleven raka’aat, pronouncing the tasleem after every two, and then concludes the prayer with one rak’ah of witr.

It has also been narrated by ‘Aai’shah and other Sahaabah that the Prophet ﷺ would also at times pray thirteen rak’ah.[13]

This shows that what is preferred and what has been most authentically reported of the Prophet ﷺ is that one performs eleven or thirteen rak’ah during the Taraaweeh. And of the two, performing eleven raka’aat is better, but if he was to perform thirteen, including the witr, then this is also from the Sunnah and is good. Praying this number is more gentle on the people. It is more conducive to the Imaam’s khushoo’[14] and recitation, its beauty, his reflection upon its verses, as well as the rukoo’ and sujood.[15] It also does not lead him to hasten his prayer.

And if one were to pray twenty-three rak’ah, including the witr, as did ‘Umar ؓ and other Sahaabah in various nights of Ramadaan, then there is no harm in this, for there is much flexibility in this matter. It has been reported in the hadeeth of ‘Aai’shah ؓ that ‘Umar ؓ and other Sahaabah prayed eleven rak’ah including the witr, and in other reports that he prayed twenty-three. It has also

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[13] This is mentioned in the hadeeth of ibn ‘Abbaas ؓ related by al-Bukhari, in which he said, “The prayer of the Prophet ﷺ would consist of thirteen raka’aat, i.e. the night prayer.”

[14] Khushoo’ (خُشُوْعٌ) is the feeling of humility and awe, and is an ‘ibaadah, or act of worship, only due to Allah.

[15] The word sujood (سُجُوْدٌ) is the verbal noun of the verb sajada (سَجَدَ). It literally means humility, and in the Qur’aan, it denotes humility to Allah and His worship. In fiqh, it means the specific prostration made to Allah, with the two hands, two knees, toes, forehead and nose touching the ground, whether it be inside the prayer or outside. [Adapted from the book ‘Mufradaat Alfaadh il-Qur’aan’ by ar-Raaghib al-Asfahaani.]

been reported that he ordered the Sahabi whom he appointed to lead the night prayer to pray eleven rak'ah, as has been reported that he ordered him to pray twenty-three. This confirms the fact that there is much flexibility in this matter, as does his ﷺ saying, "The night prayer is in pairs of two."

However, as we stated before, it is preferred that one pray eleven or thirteen rak'ah, as this is what the Prophet ﷺ himself did. And as mentioned, praying eleven rak'ah is best, due to the statement of 'Aai'shah ﵂.[16] What is meant in this statement is that he would not increase the number of raka'aat most of the time, and that is due to the fact that she and other Sahaabah also reported that he ﷺ performed thirteen rak'ah. This implies that he would sometimes increase the prayer more than eleven rak'ah.

'Aa'ishah ﵂ had the most understanding in religious matters and was the most knowledgeable of the Sunnah of the Messenger ﷺ from amongst the Sahaabiyaat. She would investigate and question what the Prophet ﷺ did when she was in his ﷺ presence, and would in turn inform other Sahaabah. She would ask the other wives of the Prophet ﷺ and Sahaabah as well. Because of her devotion to knowledge and her extensive memory, she preserved a substatial amount of knowledge and numerous ahaadeeth of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Therefore, if the Prophet ﷺ varied his prayer by performing eleven rak'ah in some nights and thirteen in others, then there is no harm in that, for it is all considered Sunnah. However, what is not permissible is that one pray four raka'aat uninterruptedly. Rather, it is obligatory to pray in pairs of two due to his ﷺ saying, "The night prayer is in pairs of two," for this is a declarative statement which [in usool al-fiqh] has the implication of a command.

Also, if one were to pray the witr prayer by performing three or

[16] See p.9.

five raka'aat uninterruptedly with one sitting, there is no harm in that either, for the Prophet ﷺ also prayed in this manner. However, one is not to pray four, six, or eight raka'aat uninterruptedly, as this has not been reported of the Prophet ﷺ. It also contradicts his command, "The night prayer is in pairs of two." And if one were to uninterruptedly perform seven or nine raka'aat, then there is no harm in that either.[17] But what is preferred is that one sits for the first tashahhud[18] after the sixth or the eighth rak'ah and then stands and completes the rest of the prayer.

All of this has been related of the Prophet ﷺ, and there is much flexibility in this matter. But what is best is to pronounce the tasleem after every two raka'aat, and then to offer one rak'ah of witr prayer, as previously quoted in the hadeeth of ibn 'Umar.[19]

This is what is preferred and is easier for the people, as some people might have other obligations to fulfill and might need to leave after two, four, or six raka'aat. So what is best and more befitting is that the Imaam[20] pray in pairs of two raka'aat, and not perform five or seven continuously. However, if he were to do that at times to clarify the Sunnah, there is no harm.

As far as the shaf'a[21] and witr are concerned, it is not befitting that they be prayed similar to the Maghrib prayer [by sitting after two

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[17] Masrooq said, "I asked 'Aa'ishah رضي الله عنها about the prayer of the Prophet ﷺ in the night, and she replied, 'Seven, nine, and eleven, not taking into account the two rak'ah Sunnah of Fajr.'" [al-Bukhari]

[18] The tashahhud (تَشَهُّدٌ) is the part of the prayer in which the person sits after performing a number of raka'aat and recites a series of supplications, and then either stands for the rest of the prayer or performs tasleem, according to the prayer he is praying.

[19] See p.8.

[20] Imaam (إِمَامٌ) linguistically is anyone or anything followed. In religious terms, it is the person who is followed in congregational prayer. Its plural is a'immah (أَئِمَّةٌ).

[21] Shaf'a (شَفْعٌ) literally is the opposite of witr, and in fiqh it is the prayer which has an even number of rak'ah which is prayed immediately before the witr.

raka'aat and standing for the third without pronouncing the tasleem], and is at the very least makrooh.[22] This is due to the prohibition of the Prophet ﷺ in making it resemble the Maghrib prayer. One is to uninterruptedly pray three raka'aat with one tasleem and one sitting, and Tawfeeq[23] is from Allah.

2. Is it better for the Imaam to vary the number of raka'aat he performs, or to limit it to eleven?

I do not know of any harm in the Imaam varying the number of raka'aat. If he prays eleven rak'ah in some nights and twenty-three in others, then there is nothing wrong in this. Even if he were to pray more than twenty-three, there is no harm in this, for there is much flexibility in the matter regarding the number of raka'aat to be performed in Taraaweeh. However, if he limits the prayer to eleven rak'ah to affirm the Sunnah and to teach the people, then there is no harm in this either.

3. There are some who pray eleven rak'ah while praying behind an Imaam who prays twenty-three, and in doing so do not complete the prayer with him. Is this in accordance with the Sunnah?

The Sunnah is to complete the prayer with the Imaam even if he

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[22] Makrooh (مَكْرُوهٌ) linguistically is something hated, and as established in usool al-fiqh is that thing which if done is not punishible, but refraining from it is rewarded.

[23] The word tawfeeq (تَوْفِيق) literally means to equate between two things. In the religious sense it is to equate between a person's actions and correctness. So Tawfeeq from Allah is that Allah grants the person the ability to accord his action or opinion to the correct one.

were to pray twenty-three rak'ah, for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whosoever stands [in prayer] with the Imaam until he completes it, Allah writes for him [the reward] as if he has prayed the whole night." It has been reported in another wording, "...the remain der of the night." Hence, it is better for the one praying to perform the prayer with the Imaam until he completes it, whether it consist of eleven, twenty-three, or any other number of raka'aat. What is better then is that one follows the Imaam until he completes the prayer. As for the authenticity of praying twenty-three rak'ah, it was done by 'Umar ؓ and other Sahaabah, so there is no fault in it. In fact, it is from the Sunnah, the Sunnah of the rightly guided successors.[24] The evidence for this is that in the hadeeth of ibn 'Umar ؓ previously mentioned, the Prophet ﷺ did not specify any particular number of raka'aat, rather, he ﷺ said, "The night prayer is in pairs of two."

4. Is there any harm in one's going to different masaajid, seeking an Imaam with a nice voice, that one may feel khushoo' and presence in heart?

What is apparent, and Allah knows best, is that there is no harm in that, if what is sought is to have khushoo' in one's prayer, pleasure and peace of heart, for all voices are not the same. Rather, he will be rewarded for it. It may well be that one feels khushoo' behind one Imaam and not another due the difference between their prayer. Hence, if one were to go to a further masjid[25] seeking to benefit from a particular Imaam's recitation, to have khushoo' in

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[24] Here the sheikh is alluding to the hadeeth in which the Prophet ﷺ said, "…and hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided successors. Bite on to it with your molars." [Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi]

[25] Masjid (مَسْجِدٌ) is a place designated specifically for the establishment of prayer. Its plural is Masaajid (مَسَاجِدُ).

one's prayer and to gain knowledge, and not out of sheer desire or to merely loaf about, there is no harm in that. It has authentically been reported in a hadeeth of the Prophet ﷺ that he said, "The greatest reward given to people by virtue of their prayer is the furthest of them in walking (i.e. distance from the masjid)." Hence, even if what was sought was to increase the number of one's footsteps, then this is a righteous goal.

5. Is there any harm in traveling to different masaajid every night seeking a pleasurable voice?

I do not know of any harm in that, though I do tend towards the opinion that one should adhere to the masjid in which one finds khushoo' and peace of heart. It may be that one shifts to a masjid in which one does not find this. Accordingly, what I hold to be correct in light of the general principles laid out in the religion is that if one finds an Imaam in whose prayer one finds khushoo' and peace of heart, then one should adhere to that masjid, or at the least frequent it. By the Grace of Allah, there is much flexibility in this matter rather than rigidity. So if one did shift to another masjid, we do not know of any harm in it, as long as one's intention was good and not evil, like showing off. But what is closer to the truth in light of the general principles laid out in the religion is that one should adhere to the masjid in which one feels khushoo' and peace of heart, a pleasing recitation, and in one which there is a large congregation. If one were to pray in a masjid in which there is a large congregation, others can take example from him, or it may be that he brings them some benefit and reminds them at times. He could also present them with a lecture. What I mean to say is that they could derive benefit from his presence. So if this is the case, that he brings benefit to a particular masjid, or he feels khushoo', peace at heart, and enjoyment in his prayer, then all this is from those things sought from it.

6. Is it preferred that the Imaam complete the entire Qur'aan in Taraaweeh?

There is great flexibility in this matter. I do not know of any evidence that suggests that it is better, except that some scholars have mentioned that it is mustahab[26] for the Imaam to recite the entire Qur'aan for the congregation, in order that they receive the opportunity to listen to it in its entirety. However, this is not a clear evidence. What is most important is that the Imaam have khushoo' in his prayer, that he feel at ease, and that the people benefit from him, even if he were not to complete except half of the Qur'aan. It is not important that he completes it, but rather that the people benefit and find peace in his prayer, khushoo', and his recitation. However, if he found it easy to complete, then all praise is for Allah, but if he did not, then what he did recite was sufficient, for his concern should be for the people and that they feel khushoo' in their prayer. The benefit of the people is more important than the mere completion of the Qur'aan, but if he were to finish the Qur'aan without causing difficulty for the people, then this is well and good.

7. Can one derive the ruling that it is better to recite the entire Qur'aan in Ramadaan from the fact that the Prophet ﷺ revised it in its entirety with Jibreel عليه السلام?

What can be derived is that it is mustahab that a believer revise the Qur'aan with one he can achieve benefit. The Messenger ﷺ

[26] Mustahab (مُسْتَحَبٌّ) literally means something which is liked or loved. In fiqh, it is that action which is rewarded if done but not punishable if left.

revised the Qur’aan with Jibreel عليه السلام in order to derive benefit from him,[27] for Jibreel came from the presence of Allah عز وجل and is His ambassador. Naturally, the Prophet ﷺ derived benefit from what he brought from Allah عز وجل by reaffirming the recitation of the Qur’aan and its meanings. Therefore, if a person revised the Qur’aan with one who helped him to understand it and correct its recitation, then this is something desired, just as the Prophet ﷺ revised the Qur’aan with Jibreel عليه السلام.

However, this does not mean that Jibreel عليه السلام is superior to the Prophet ﷺ, but rather that Jibreel عليه السلام is a messenger that comes from the presence of Allah. He informed the Messenger ﷺ what Allah ordered him in regards to the Qur’aan, its recitation, and its meaning. In this way, the Messenger ﷺ benefited from Jibreel عليه السلام. So Jibreel عليه السلام is not superior to the Prophet ﷺ, rather he ﷺ is the best of creation and is even superior to the angels. Much good resulted in the Prophet’s ﷺ revision of the Qur’aan, for himself as well as for his ﷺ Ummah, for he ﷺ derived benefit from what was brought from Allah عز وجل.

In addition to this, another benefit can be derived, and it is that revision during the night is superior to the day, for the Prophet ﷺ revised the Qur’aan with Jibreel عليه السلام during the night. And it is known that one is more likely to benefit during the night, as the heart is more present and focused at that time.

What can also be derived is that revision is something which is legislated in the religion, and that it is considered a righteous deed. This is true outside Ramadaan as well, for there is great benefit derived in it by all. And if there were more than two, then there is no harm in that; all of them will derive benefit, encourage,

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[27] Al-Bukhari related that ibn ‘Abbaas رضي الله عنهما said: “The Prophet was the most generous of people, but he would be his most generous during Ramadaan when he would meet with [the angel] Jibreel عليه السلام. He would meet with him every night and recite the Qur’aan. Whenever he met with Jibreel عليه السلام, he used to be more generous than a fast wind.”

and motivate each other in recitation. It may be that a person has no motivation if he were to revise by himself; but if one or more of his friends were to study with him, they would encourage him. All would derive much benefit by studying and researching that which they do not easily understand. And in all that is much good.

And it may also be understood from this fact that the recitation of the entire Qur'aan by the Imaam with the congregation in Ramadaan is a type of revision, and that the congregation can derive much benefit from listening to the Qur'aan in its entirety. For this reason, Imaam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him, used to love that those who led [the prayer] complete the Qur'aan for the congregation. These were the types of deeds done by our pious predecessors out of the love of hearing the recitation of the entire Qur'aan. However, this is not something mandatory, for it may well cause the Imaam to haste in his recitation. Hence, he will not pay much attention to the aspect of khushoo' and peace of heart. To consider these aspects is more deserving than merely seeking to complete the Qur'aan.

8. What is your opinion about the specification of a fixed amount of Qur'aan to be recited in every rak'ah?

I do not see anything wrong in this. This depends upon the Imaam. If he sees that it is in his and the congregation's interest to increase the amount of recitation in a certain rak'ah because of his alertness, motivation, khushoo' and enjoyment, and if his voice is pleasing, then I do not see any harm in this. This matter has much flexibility, by the Grace of Allah, the Most High.

9. Is the condition of the weak, the old, and their likes

to be held in this regard?

This is sought in all prayers, the five daily prayers as well as the Taraaweeh, for the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whosoever among you leads the people in prayer, then he should make it light, for verily among them are the weak, the young, and those who have needs to attend." [al-Bukhari] The Imaam should be considerate of the congregation and be easy on them, in the Taraaweeh as well as in the last ten nights of Ramadaan, for not all people are the same. It is incumbent upon the Imaam that he be considerate to their condition, and that he encourages the people to attend the prayer, for whenever he lengthens his recitation, he causes them inconvenience and drives them away. He should do whatever encourages the people to attend the prayer, even if he were to shorten the it, for the prayer in which people feel at peace, even if it was short, is better than one in which there is boredom, laziness, and a lack of khushoo'.

10. What is the general principle that can be applied to decide the length of the prayer, for some people in the congregation complain about it?

This decision should be based either upon the weak or upon the opinion of the majority. If the majority of the congregation wishes to prolong the prayer, and there is none amongst them that should be taken into special consideration, no one weak, ill or elderly, then there is no harm in that. And if the weak, the ill or the elderly are present, then it is incumbent on the Imaam to take their welfare into consideration. In this respect, it has been narrated by 'Uthmaan bin Abi 'Aas ؓ that the Prophet ﷺ said to him, "Consider the weakest among them," and in another hadeeth, "...for verily behind him are the weak and the elderly." [Abu Dawud] What is meant here by 'considering' is that the Imaam should

shorten the recitation, rukoo', and sujood. If the individuals in the congregation were similar in nature, then the decision should be based upon the majority.

11. Is there a difference between the Taraaweeh and the Qiyaam? And is there any evidence for lengthening the standing, rukoo' and sujood in the last ten days of Ramadaan?

The prayer which is performed throughout the month of Ramadaan is [also] called the Qiyaam [as well as Taraaweeh, i.e. they are synonymous].[28] The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever stands[29] [in prayer] in Ramadaan with Eeman[30] and hoping to attain reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." [al-Bukhari, Muslim] If one stands as much as is easy for him with the Imaam, then this is called the Qiyaam. However, in the last ten nights, it is deemed praiseworthy that one lengthen the prayer, for it has been legislated that one give life to the last ten nights by staying awake in prayer, recitation, and supplication, as did the Messenger ﷺ. In some nights, he would recite Surah al-Baqarah,

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[28] A common misconception amongst people is that the Taraaweeh is an additional prayer other than the Qiyaam or Tahajjud (see footnote #49) only performed in Ramadaan, although this is not truly the case. The reality is that these three prayers are one and the same, except that it in Ramadaan, there are specific rulings dealing with it, i.e. praying it in congregation.

[29] The arabic word for 'stands' is qaama (قَامَ), and qiyaam (قِيَامٌ) is a derivative of it.

[30] Eeman (إِيْمَانٌ) consists of three parts:

(i) True belief and confirmation of the heart,

(ii) Speech of the tongue,

(iii) Action of the limbs.

If any of them is absent, then Eemaan itself is not present.

an-Nisaa', and Aali-'Imraan, all in one rak'ah![31] People should emulate the Prophet ﷺ by giving life to the last ten nights of Ramadaan, contrary to the first twenty in which he ﷺ would sleep as well as stay awake and pray, as has been reported in numerous ahaadeeth. As for the last ten nights, the Prophet ﷺ would awaken his family, tighten his ﷺ lower garment around his ﷺ waist, and give life to the whole night, because in it is Laylatul-Qadar.[32]

12. Is it permissible for the Imaam to hold the mushaf

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[31] In a hadeeth narrated by Muslim, Hudhaifah he said, "I prayed with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ one night when he started Surah al-Baqarah. So I said [to myself] 'He will make rukoo' after one hundred aayah.' But he carried on, so I thought, 'He will finish it in two raka'aat.' But he carried on, so I thought, 'He will make rukoo' when he has finished it.' Then he started Surah an-Nisaa' and recited it all, and then Aali 'Imran and recited all. He was reciting slowly; when he came upon an ayah in which there was glorification of Allah, he glorified Allah; at an aayah which had something to be asked for, he asked for it; at the mention of seeking refuge, he sought refuge. Then he made rukoo' and said: Subhaana Rubbiy al-'Adheem [trans.: Glory be to my Lord the Most Magnificient]. His bowing lasted about the same length of time as his standing, [and then on returning to the standing posture after rukoo',] he said: Sami'Allahu liman hamidah [trans.: Allah listens to him who praises Him], and then stood about the same length of time as he had spent in bowing. He then prostrated himself and said Subhaana Rubbiy al-A'laa [trans.: Glory be to my Lord Most High], and his prostration lasted nearly the same length of time as his standing." In the hadeeth transmitted by Jareer, the words are: "He (the Prophet ﷺ) said: Sami'Allahu liman hamidah Rubbanaa lakal- hamd [trans.: Allah listens to him who praises Him, our Lord, praise be to Thee]."

[32] On the authority of 'Aa'ishah رضي الله عنها, may Allah be pleased with her, she said, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered the last ten [nights] of Ramadaan, he would give life to the night, awaken his family, expend energy in obedience, and tighten his lower garment around his waist." [al-Bukhari, Muslim] Here, the phrase 'tighten his lower garment' is a metaphor which means 'prepare to do a hard task', as is said to 'roll up one's sleeves' in English.

[33] while leading the prayer?

The correct opinion is that there is no harm in this. Though there is a difference amongst the scholars, the correct opinion is that there is no harm in that he recites from the mushaf, whether it be that he has not memorized the Qur’aan, or if his memorization is weak. In this case, it is more beneficial to his own self as well as the congregation, so there is no harm in it. Imaam al-Bukhari mentioned in a mu’allaq[34] hadeeth on the authority of Aa’ishah ﵂, that her slave, Dhakwaan, would lead her in prayer in the night while reciting from a mushaf. The general principle is that it is allowed, and the hadeeth of Aa’ishah ﵂ supports this. However, if it is easy for the Imaam to recite from his memory, then this is more befitting. It is more focused and less distracting to the heart, for carrying a mushaf entails picking it up, placing it down, searching through its pages, and turning to it when needed. Hence, if one can do without it, then that is better.

13. Is it permissible for one or more from the congregation to carry a mushaf during the Taraaweeh prayer?

I do not know of any evidence to support this. It is apparent

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[33] A Mushaf (مُصْحَفٌ) is literally something used to gather a collection of suhuf (صُحُفٌ), the plural of saheefah (صَحِيْفَةٌ), which is literally something flat used to write on. Specifically, it is the book in which the Qur’aan is written. This book is not called the Qur’aan, because the Qur’aan is something recited, and is the actual words, and not the book in itself.

[34] A type of hadeeth in which one or more narrators are ommitted at the bottom of the chain, immediate to the one relating the hadeeth. This hadeeth is usually regarded as weak, but in regards to al-Bukhaari, they are of two types: those which are weak, and those which are authentic, and they can be told apart by the wording al-Bukhaari used to relate the hadeeth. Also it should be noted that he did not include them amongst his collection, but rather used these ahaadeeth for chapter headings.

though, that one should have khushoo' and feel at peace in his prayer and not carry a mushaf. One should put his right hand over one's left hand as is the sunnah. One should place one's right hand on one's left hand, wrist, and forearm[35] and put them on one's chest.[36] This is what is preferred and more correct. Carrying a mushaf prevents one from doing these acts of sunnah and prevents one from concentrating on the Imaam and his recitation. Rather, it keeps one's heart and eyes busy in examining its pages and verses. So what I believe is that leaving it is the Sunnah. One should listen and concentrate on the recitation rather than use the mushaf. And if someone from the congregation comes to know that the Imaam has made a mistake, then he should correct him, and if he does not, then someone else should correct him. However, if the Imaam does happen to make a mistake in recitation and he is not corrected, it does not influence the correctness of the prayer. A mistake only harms the prayer if it is made in Surah al-Faatihah, for it is a rukn[37] of the prayer. However, if one were to carry a mushaf and correct the Imaam when it necessitates, then there may be no harm in that. As for every person carrying a mushaf, this is contrary to the Sunnah.

14. What is the ruling concerning weeping in a loud

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[35] "He would place the right arm on the back of his left palm, wrist, and forearm." [Abu Dawud]

[36] "He would place them on his chest." [Abu Dawud]

[37] A pillar, or rukn, in fiqh is that which is part of the act of worship in its foundation, in that it cannot be imagined that the act of worship be present with the absence of that thing. For example, in trade, the person selling the product is one of its pillars, for it cannot be imagined that trade exist without a person selling the product. If a pillar is void in an act of worship, then the act of worship is not valid until that pillar is compensated for, either by repeating the whole act, or performing the pillar which was omitted, as laid out by the religion.

voice that has become apparent in many masaajid?

I have warned many who have inquired against this act. This is not befitting due the fact that it distracts the Imaam as well as others. So what is incumbent upon the believer is that he be cautious in that he is not heard weeping, and that he be cautious that he does not show off, for the shaytaan might lead him to this. It is incumbent that he does not disturb people by his weeping. It is true that some do not weep of their own choice, rather, it being something which overwhelms them without intending it. This is forgiven if it occurs unintentionally. It has been authentically reported that when the Prophet ﷺ recited, a sound like the wheezing of a cauldron could be heard because of his weeping.[38] And it has also been reported that when Abu Bakr ﷺ recited the Qur'aan, people could not hear due to his weeping.[39] Also, it has been reported of 'Umar ﷺ that his weeping could be heard from the last rows of the congregation. This does not mean, though, that they would intentionally raise their voices in crying; rather, it was something that overwhelmed them because of the khashyah[40] of Allah ﷻ. Therefore, if one does become overwhelmed with weeping without intending, there is no harm in that.

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[38] In a hadeeth related by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi and an-Nasaa'i, Abdullah bin Shikheer said, "I came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ as he was engaged in prayer, and I heard a sound within him like the gurgling of a pot, meaning that he was weeping." In another version in Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi, he said, "I saw Allah's Messenger ﷺ engaged in prayer and (heard) a sound from his breast like the rumbling of a mill, owing to his weeping."

[39] 'Aa'ishah ﷺ said, "They used to wonder and look at him. Abu Bakr ﷺ was a man who used to weep much, and he could not help but weep upon reciting the Qur'aan." [al-Bukhari]

[40] Khashyah (خَشْيَة) is fear bought about by awe, and is specific to the case in which that which is feared is something known, rather than unknown.

15. What is the ruling concerning the Imaam repeating particular verses of the Qur'aan which deal with Allah's mercy or His punishment?

I do not know any harm in that if his intention was to encourage the people to contemplate, benefit, and to feel khushoo' in their prayer, for it has been related of the Prophet ﷺ that he repeated Allah's saying, the Most High,[41]

﴿إِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ وَ إِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ﴾

> "If You do punish them, they are indeed your servants, and if You do forgive them, You are indeed the Exalted in power, the Wise."
>
> [Surah al-Maa'idah(4):118]

He ﷺ repeated this verse many times. So the fact is that if this was done with a righteous intention and not to show off, then there is nothing to prohibit this. But if this repetition was disturbing to the people, or if they were to become distracted by the weeping brought about from it, refraining from it is better. However, if this repetition did not result in any disturbance but in fact resulted in khushoo', contemplation, and interest in prayer, then this is all well and good.

16. What is the ruling concerning the Imaam repeating the verses that describe the characteristics of Allah?

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[41] An-Nasaa'i, ibn Khuzaimah, Ahmad, ibn Nasr, and al-Haakim.

I do not know of any narration in this regard. What has been related of the Prophet ﷺ does not make a distinction between the verses describing the characteristics of Allah and other verses. It may well result in weeping and khushoo', for these verses mention the magnificence of Allah and His countless blessings. And from these verses is His saying ﷻ,

﴿إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمَـٰوَاتِ وَ الأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ
ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي الَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ
حَثِيْثًا...إلخ﴾

"Indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then He rose over the Throne. He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly…"

[Surah al-A'raaf(7):54]

Indeed if one contemplates this verse, one is caused to weep and feel khushoo' from the khashyah of Allah ﷻ. Also from these is His سبحانه وتعالى saying,

﴿هُوَ اللهُ الَّذِيْ لا إِلَـٰهَ إِلا هُوَ عَـٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَـٰدَةِ
هُوَ الرَّحْمَـٰنُ الرَّحِيْمُ. هُوَ اللهُ الَّذِيْ لا إِلَـٰهَ إِلا هُوَ
الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوْسُ السَّلَـٰمُ الْمُؤمِن...إلخ﴾

"He is Allah Besides Whom there is none worthy of worship except Him, the all-Knower of the Unseen and seen. He is the Most Gracious, Most Merciful. He is Allah Besides Whom there is none worthy of worship except Him, the King, the Holy, the One free from all defects. The Giver of Secu-

rity…"

[Surah al-Hashr(59):22-23]

All of these verses may well cause one to weep, for one recalls the Magnificence of Allah and the perfection of His favors upon His servants. In addition, what is moving are the meanings of Allah's characteristics. So contemplation of the verses which mention the Names of Allah is very important, as well as the verses which describe al-Jannah,[42] an-Naar,[43] or those that mention the mercy of Allah and His punishment. Hudhaifah ﵁ narrated that when the Prophet ﷺ came upon a verse concerning the greatness of Allah, he would exalt Him, and when he came upon a verse concerning His punishment he would supplicate. To supplicate upon hearing the verses of hope, to seek refuge upon hearing the verses of fear, and to exalt Allah upon hearing the verses describing His attributes are all from the Prophet's ﷺ Sunnah.

17. What about those who weep in supplication and not when they hear the Words of Allah ﷻ?

This is may not necessarily be done by choice, but it may be that a person's soul is moved in supplication and not in recitation. It is necessary, though, that he cures himself of this. It is more important to feel khushoo' in the recitation than in supplication. However if he were to feel khushoo' both in his recitation and his supplication, then this is all well and good, because having khushoo'

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[42] Jannah (جَنَّةٌ) is literally a derivation of the verb janna (جَنَّ), to conceal, and it is so called because it is hidden from sight by trees. In the religious sense, it is the garden which Allah has prepared for the believers. It might also be called so because its reality is something which is hidden from us.

[43] An-Naar (النَّارُ), is the hellfire prepared for those who do not subject themselves to Allah's religion.

in the supplication is a means for its acceptance. It is necessary, though, that more importance is paid to the recitation because it is the Speech of Allah, and that it is a Guidance and a Light. The Prophet ﷺ and the Sahaabah ﷻ would contemplate and comprehend the Qur'aan, and as a result they would weep. An example of this is the Prophet's ﷺ saying to 'Abdullah bin Mas'ood ﷻ, "Recite to me the Qur'aan." 'Abdullah replied, "How should I recite to you, when it was you to whom it was revealed?" The Prophet ﷺ then said, "I love to hear its recitation from someone other than myself." Thereupon ibn Mas'ood recited the Qur'aan from the beginning of Surah an-Nisaa' until he reached Allah's ﷻ saying…

﴿فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيْدٍ وَ جِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى
هَـٰؤُلاءِ شَهِيْدًا﴾

> "How (will it be) then, when We bring from each nation a witness, and We bring you (O Muhammad ﷺ) as a witness against these people?"
>
> [Surah an-Nisaa'(4):41]

…until the Prophet ﷺ said, "That is enough." ibn Mas'ood ﷻ said, "So I turned my gaze towards him," or he said, "So I raised my head towards him, and behold! His eyes were overflowing with tears." [al-Bukhari]

What is apparent from this hadeeth is that the Prophet ﷺ wept without any sound issuing forth, and that ibn Mas'ood came to know of his weeping only by the presence of his tears. It has also been reported in the hadeeth of 'Abdullah bin Shikhir, that he heard wheezing like the wheezing of a cauldron from the Prophet's ﷺ chest because his weeping. This evidence shows that his weeping could sometimes be heard, but without it being disturbing.

18. What is the ruling about forcing oneself to cry, and what is the authenticity of what has been reported in this regard?

It has been reported in some traditions, "If you do not weep, then force yourself to weep," but I do not know its authenticity. It has been related by Ahmad, however, I do not recall anything regarding its authenticity except that it is commonly mentioned amongst the scholars. But this needs more care and study, for I do not recall at this moment the condition of its chain of narration.[44] But what is apparent is that one should not be burdened to force oneself, but that if one does weep, one should struggle with oneself as much as possible that it be soft and not disturbing to others.

19. What is meant by reciting the Qur'aan melodiously?

It has been encouraged to recite the Qur'aan melodiously in the authentic Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, but what is meant by this is

[44] "After speaking about the types of weeping, ibn al-Qayyim discusses those who urge themselves to weep; he says in 'Zaad al-Ma'aad': 'This can be of two types: praiseworthy or blameworthy. As for the praiseworthy type of weeping, then it is sought after to soften the heart and to increase one's deep fear of Allaah, and it is not for the sake of being heard or seen by the people. As for the blameworthy type of weeping, it is sought after because of the creation… The statement of 'Umar ؓ is mentioned with regards to the prisoners of war from the battle of Badr: '…and if I do not cry, I will make myself cry, because you are both [the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ] crying.' The Prophet ﷺ did not disapprove of it. Some of the salaf have said, 'Weep out of the deep fear of Allah and if you cannot weep then make yourself weep.' '" [p.49, 'Weeping from the Fear of Allaah', Shaykh Husayn al-'Awaayishah, Al-Hidaayah Publishing and Distribution, 1419 AH/1998 CE]

thatone beautify one's voice in recitation without it rese mbling singing. It has been reported in an authentic tradition, "Allah does not listen to anything more than He listens to a prophet reciting with an audible and beautiful voice." [al-Bukhari] And in another tradition, "He is not from us who does not recite the Qur'aan audibly and melodiously." [Abu Dawud, Haakim] What is meant here is to beautify the voice in recitation, as explained earlier. As for the previous hadeeth, Allah's attribute of listening cannot be compared with the listening of the creation, but rather it exists in a way befitting to Allah. And this is also the case with all other attributes of Allah; they exist in a way befitting to Him, Exalted and Most High. There is nothing like Him, Exalted and Most High, as Allah ﷻ said,

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ﴾

> "…There is nothing like Him, and He is the all-Knowing, all-Seeing."
>
> [Surah ash-Shuraa(42):11]

What is meant by reciting melodiously is that he recites with an audible voice while beautifying it and has khushoo' in it so as to stir the hearts, because what is desired is that the hearts be affected by the Qur'aan. He should feel khushoo', feel at peace, and benefit from its recitation. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ once came across Abu Musaa al-Ash'ari ؓ while he was reciting the Qur'aan and stopped to listen to him. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Indeed he has been given a flute from the flutes of the family of Dawud." When Abu Musaa came to him, the Prophet ﷺ informed him of this, so Abu Musaa replied, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, if I had known that you were listening to me, I would have embellished it more." [al-Bukhari]

Here, the Prophet ﷺ did not object to what he said, so this gives evidence that embellishing the voice, beautifying it, and taking

care in its recitation is something desired in order that the one reciting it feel khushoo' and the one listening to it benefit from it.

20. In what period of time should one complete the Qur'aan?

There is no prescribed period of time, except that it is best that it should not be completed in less than three days, as in the hadeeth of 'Abdullah bin 'Amr, "He does not understand the Qur'aan who recites it in less than three days."[45]

So what is best is that one should seek to have khushoo', contemplate, and beautify his recitation, for what is desired is that he should benefit and not that he should haste. It is important that one increase in recitation of the Qur'aan in Ramadaan, as our Salaf[46] did, may Allah be pleased with them, but it must by accompanied by contemplation and comprehension. So if one finished the Qur'aan every three days, then that is well and good. Some of our pious predecessors made an exception to this principle in special times and stated that there is no harm if one finish the Qur'aan every night or every day. This is attributed to Imaam ash-Shafi'i

[45] Yazid bin 'Abdullah said that 'Abdullah bin 'Amr ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ, "In how many days should I complete the recitation of the Qur'aan, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" He replied, "In one month." He said, "I am more energetic to complete it in a period less than this." He kept on repeating these words and reducing the period until he ﷺ said, "Complete its recitation in seven days." He again said, "I am more energetic to complete it in a period less than this." The Prophet ﷺ said, "He who finishes the recitation of the Qur'aan in less than three days does not understand it." [Abu Dawud]

[46] The word salaf (سَلَفٌ) literally means those who have preceded. Here, it is those who have preceded us known for their righteousness and accordance with the Sunnah, specifically the first three generations in Islam, as mentioned in an authentic hadeeth, "The best of people are my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them." [at-Tirmidhi, ibn Maajah, Ahmad, al-Haakim]

and others from amongst our pious predecessors. However, it is apparent from the Sunnah that there is no difference between Ramadaan and other times. Rather, it is incumbent not to haste, but that one find peace of heart in recitation and beautify it, as the Prophet ﷺ ordered ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amr in his saying, “Recite it in seven days.” This is the last of what the Prophet ﷺ ordered him and said after that, “He who recites the Qur’aan in less than three days does not understand it.” [Ahmad] Here, the Prophet ﷺ did not make an exception for Ramadaan. So what some of our pious predecessors said about not applying this to Ramadaan has room for difference. And what is closer to the truth, and Allah knows best, is that it is legislated for a believer that he pays great importance to the Qur’aan, that he strives to perfect its recitation, that he contemplates its meanings, and that he does not haste in its completion. And what is best is that that he does not finish the Qur’aan in less than three days. This is what is incumbent as far as what is found in the Snnah, even if it were in Ramadaan.

21. What is the ruling regarding the Imaam charging a fee for leading the people in Taraaweeh, especially if he were to commute from a large distance?

It is not befitting that the Imaam should charge a fee. Many of our pious predecessors disliked this. Nevertheless, if the congregation were to help out of their own accord rather than it being something stipulated, then there is no harm in that. As for the validity of his prayer, this has no influence on it, if Allah wills, even if a fee was set in order to help him, as necessity might dictate. It is incumbent, though, that the Imaam does not ask for a fee on his part, because this then becomes a prerequisite. Rather it should be something given by the congregation out of their own free accord. This is better and more cautious, as many of our predecessors

have stated, may Allah have mercy on them. This is confirmed by the saying of the Prophet ﷺ in which he said to ‘Uthmaan bin abi ‘Aas ﵁, “Choose a mu’adhin[47] who does not take a fee for his adhaan.”[48] If this were the case for the mu’adhin, then it is more so for the Imaam. It is not befitting that a fee be set as a prerequisite for leading the people in prayer, but if the congregation were to help him in the cost of transport out of their own accord, then this is well and good.

22. What is the ruling regarding the recitation of Surah al-A'laa, Surah al-Kaafiroon, and Surah al-Ikhlaas in the last three rak’ah of the Tahajjud? [49] What has been reported in regards to reciting the last three suwar [50] of the Qur’aan in the last rak’ah of the witr prayer?

This is what is preferred, but if the Imaam was to refrain from their recitation at times as a means to inform the people that it is not obligatory, then this is well and good. And if not, then it is better that one should emulate the Prophet ﷺ, for he would recite Surah al-A'laa, Surah al-Kaafiroon, and Surah al-Ikhlaas in the three raka’aat of witr.[51] But if a person was to leave their recitation

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[47] The mu’adhin (مُؤَذِّن) caller of the Adhaan (أَذَان), the call to prayer.

[48] Abu Dawud related on the authority of ‘Uthman bin abi ‘Aas, that he said, “O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, appoint me as the leader of the tribe in prayer.” He said, “You are their leader, but follow the weakest of them, and appoint a mu’adhin who does not charge for the adhaan.”

[49] The word tahajjud (تَهَجُّد) is literally to forgo sleep. In the religious sense, it is analogous to the Qiyaam and Taraaweeh (see footnote #28).

[50] The plural of surah.

[51] “He ﷺ used to recite ‘Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High’ (Surah al-A’laa) in the first rak’ah, ‘Say O you who disbelieve’ (Surah al-Kaafiroon), in the second, and ‘Say He is Allah, the One’ (Surah al-Ikhlaas) in the third.” [an-Nasaa’i, al-Haakim]

at times to teach the people that this is not mandatory, then it is well and good. This is also what some of our predecessors have stated in regards to refraining from the recitation of Surah as-Sajdah and al-Insaan. The Sunnah is to recite these two suwar in the Fajr prayer every Friday.[52] But if the Imaam were to leave it at times to teach the people that it is not mandatory, then there is no harm in this. One could also say the same for not reciting Surah al-A'laa, Surah al-Kaafiroon, and Surah al-Ikhlaas in the last three rak'ah of the witr prayer. But it is better is that he increases in their recitation and makes them the majority of what is recited. As for what has been reported in reciting the last three suwar of the Qur'aan in the last rak'ah of the witr prayer, it is a weak hadeeth. What is authentic is that he only recites Surah al-Ikhlaas.

23. What is the ruling concerning supplicating after the completion of the Qur'aan?

Our pious predecessors did not leave the supplications recited upon the completion of the Qur'aan during the prayer of Ramadaan, and we do not know of any difference in this regard. What is best is that the Imaam should supplicate, but not lengthen the supplication. He should seek to recite those supplications that are beneficial and inclusive in meaning, as 'Aai'shah ﵂ said, "The Prophet ﷺ was fond of those supplications that were inclusive in meaning and refrained from other supplications." So what is better is that the Imaam should seek to supplicate with those which are inclusive in meaning without lengthening them. He should recite the supplication, "O Allah guide me from those whom you have

[52] In a hadeeth related by al-Bukhari, Abu Hurairah narrated that, "The Prophet ﷺ used to recite the following in the Fajr prayer of Friday, 'Alif Laam Meem Tanzeel' (Surah as-Sajdah) and 'Has there come to man a time' (Surah ad-Dahr or al-Insaan)." [al-Bukhari]

guided,” in the Qunoot[53] as has been reported in a hasan[54] hadeeth. Along with this, he should recite other good and easy supplications, as in the addition of ‘Umar ﷺ,[55] without lengthening them, thus in fact causing burden and inconvenience to the people. This is how the supplication upon the completion the Qur’aan should be; he should supplicate with what is easy for him, and that they should be inclusive in meaning. He should start by praising Allah and sending peace and prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ, and then complete the supplication with what is easy, whether it be in the night prayer or in the witr. He should not lengthen it so as to cause distress or inconvenience.

This is what is known from our pious predecessors, and this example was followed by later generations. Our scholars and teachers along with their dedication for the Sunnah followed this as well, the latter emulating the former. This is considered to be an obvious fact by the A’immatud-Da’wah,[56] who are known to be keen in the Sunnah. The fact of the matter remains that there is no harm or blame in this, if Allah wills, but rather that this is something that is deemed praiseworthy, because by doing this one seeks response to one’s supplication after the completion of the Book of Allah ﷻ. When Anas ﷺ would complete the Qur’aan, he would gather his family and supplicate outside of the prayer. This is just as well whether it is within the prayer or outside it because supplication has been legislated at both times, so there can be no objection in this.

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[53] Qunoot (قُنُوْتٌ) literally means obedience coupled with humility. In fiqh, it is a particular supplication performed in the witr prayer, or other prayers due to a particular event.

[54] A ‘hasan’ hadeeth is an authentic hadeeth that does not quite reach the highest level of authencity, or saheeh, in itself.

[55] Al-Bayhaqi in as-Sunan al-Kubraa. [See ‘Hisnul-Muslim’, Chapter 32]

[56] The term A’immatud-Da’wah’, or Leader of the call, is used to denote the scholars of Saudia Arabia upon the da’wah of Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhaab.

And it is well known that upon reciting a verse which describes the punishment or the mercy of Allah, one should supplicate as the Prophet ﷺ did in the night prayer. This is similar to the matter at hand in that it is also legislated to supplicate after the completion of the Qur'aan. The point of contention is only whether one should supplicate within the prayer. As for supplicating outside of it, then I do not know of any difference of opinion other than that it is deemed praiseworthy, but the difference lies within the prayer. I do not know anyone from our pious predecessors who has objected to supplicating within the prayer, and I do not know anyone who has objected to supplication outside it. So this is what is used as a basis, that it was something known to our predecessors, of which the former as well as the latter acted upon. Whosoever says that this is wrong should come with some evidence, for the burden of proof does not lie upon the one who acts according to what our pious predecessors did. The evidence is to be established by the one who says that it is wrong and that it is an innovation. This is what our pious predecessors of the Ummah chose and tread upon. The latter generations took example from the former, and amongst them were the scholars, the virtuous, and the scholars of hadeeth. The recitation of various supplications in the night prayer is something known to be from the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, and what is recited upon the completion of the Qur'aan is within this class of supplication.

24. Should the supplication recited upon the completion of the Qur'aan be recited before the rukoo' or after?

It is better that it be recited after the recitation of Surah an-Naas. Whenever one completes the recitation of the Qur'aan, he should supplicate, whether it be in the first, second, or last rak'ah. What I mean to say is that after he completes the recitation of the Qur'aan, he is to start supplicating at any time of the prayer,

whether it be in the first, the middle, or the last rak'ah. There is no harm in any of this. What is important is that he makes supplication after he completes its recitation. And the Sunnah is that he does not lengthen the supplication or the Qunoot, and that he limits himself to those supplications that are inclusive in meaning.

It has been reported that the Prophet ﷺ recited the Qunoot before the rukoo' as well as after it, but most of the time he recited it after. The supplication recited upon the completion of the Qur'aan is in the same class as the Qunoot in witr. This is because it is recited due to the completion of the Qur'aan, and it has been legislated that supplications recited due to specific reasons are to be recited in the Qunoot. This Qunoot is to be recited in the last rak'ah after he raises his head from the rukoo' as the Prophet ﷺ did. This supplication is recited because the completion of the Qur'aan is an immense favor that Allah bestows upon His servant, for he has completed the Book of Allah ﷻ. Due to this favor, he should supplicate to Allah that He causes him to benefit from the guidance found in His Book, that He makes him from its people, that He helps him to remember and thank Him, and that He makes his heart and deeds righteous. He is to supplicate, as he usually supplicates before pronouncing the tasleem after Allah has blessed him the completion of the prayer in the five daily prayers. This is also the case in the witr prayer; he is to supplicate in the Qunoot after the completion of the Qur'aan.

25. Is there any particular supplication mentioned in the Sunnah which can be recited after the completion of the Qur'aan? What is the authenticity of the supplication attributed to ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him?

From what we know, there is no particular supplication which has been mentioned in the Qur'aan or the Sunnah. One may supplicate

with whatever one pleases; one may choose from any of the beneficial supplications, like the seeking of forgiveness for sins, success in attaining al-Jannah, savior from an-Naar, seeking of refuge from trials, seeking of the blessing in memorizing the Noble Qur'aan, understanding and acting upon it, and any other similar supplications. It has been related of Anas ﷺ that he would gather his family and supplicate upon completing the recitation of the Qur'aan. As for the Prophet ﷺ, from what I know, nothing has been mentioned in this regard.

As for the supplication attributed to ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on Him, I do not know of its authenticity. It is known amongst our scholars, teachers and others, but I have not come across it in any of his works, and Allah knows best. [Taken from Majallah al-Buhooth al-Islaamiyyah. #20. p.186]

26. What is the ruling concerning traveling to different masaajid seeking to participate in the supplication recited upon the completion of the Qur'aan?

This may be done for a number of reasons. If what was sought by this was the acceptance of his supplication, then there is no harm, for indeed Allah may answer the supplication of one person and not another. If the intention of the one traveling to different masaajid was good, like hoping to be from amongst those whose supplication is answered, then there is no harm in this.

27. What is the ruling traveling to Makkah or Madinah in order to participate in the supplication of the completion of the Qur'aan?

Traveling to Makkah and Madinah for 'Umrah[57] or prayer in al-Masjid al-Haraam[58] or the Prophet's ﷺ Masjid, whether it be in Ramadaan or in any other month, is considered an act of obedience and is a means to draw close to Allah according to the ijmaa'[59] of the Muslims.[60] There is no harm in this because participation in the supplication also entails participation in the prayer. Along with this, One may also perform 'Umrah, thereby leading to another righteous deed.

28. What is the ruling regarding the supplication of the Qunoot in the witr and Fajr prayers?

The Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ is to supplicate with the Qunoot in the witr prayer, but if one leaves it at times, then there is no harm.[61] As for making the Qunoot in the Fajr prayer consistently, there is no legislation for this; rather, it is an innovation. It has been reported by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasaa'i, and ibn Maajah, may Allah have mercy on them, on the authority of Sa'd bin Taariq bin Ashyam al-Ashja'i that he said, "O father, verily you

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[57] The act of worhsip in which one visits al-Masjid al-Haraam and performs Tawaaf-circumambulation, and Sa'i- walking to and fro from the two mounts Safaa' and Marwah.

[58] One of the three holy masaajid in Islam located in the city of Makkah and is also the first place built for the worship of Allah. It is called al-Masjid al-Haraam because Allah has made prohibited in it much of what is normally permissible in other places.

[59] Ijmaa' (إجْمَاعٌ) is a term used to denote the consensus of the scholars in a particular era over a specific issue.

[60] On the authority of Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "One prayer in my masjid is better than a thousand prayers in any other masjid, except al-Masjid-al-Haraam."[al-Bukhari]

[61] Darqutni reported that the Prophet ﷺ, "…would perform Qunoot in the rak'ah of the witr prayer."

have observed prayer behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan, and ‘Ali, may Allah be pleased with them all. Did they recite the Qunoot in the Fajr prayer?” He replied, “My son, this is an innovation.”

In this hadeeth, Taariq clarified that this act is an innovation. However, it has been reported on the authority of Anas, Abu Hurairah and others that the Prophet ﷺ would make Qunoot at times of misfortune in the Fajr prayer as well as others. If a trial has befallen the Muslims from the enemy, a calamity occurs amongst the believers, or a squadron of believers is killed or its likes, it has been legislated for the a'immah of the masaajid to make Qunoot in the last rak’ah of the Fajr prayer after the rukoo’. It is to be made for as long as the calamity lasts, whether it be a day or a month, and then is to be discontinued. This the Sunnah, that it should be done in times of crisis or necessity without it being consistent. As for consistently reciting it, whether in the Fajr prayer or others [other than witr], it is in opposition to the Sunnah. As for the ahaadeeth which report that the recitation of the Qunoot should be consistent in the Fajr prayer, they are all weak according to the scholars of hadeeth, and Tawfeeq is from Allah.

29. What is the ruling concerning the raising of the hands in the Qunoot of witr?

It has been legislated to raise the hands in the Qunoot of the witr prayer. The Qunoot of witr is of the same class of supplications as the Qunoot recited in times of calamity, and it has been related by al-Bayhaqi with an authentic chain of narration that the Prophet ﷺ raised his hands when he supplicated with the Qunoot in times of calamity.

30. Is it from the Sunnah that the Imaam begin the Qunoot by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ?

It has not reached my attention that the Prophet ﷺ or the Sahaabah would begin the Qunoot by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. But what has been reported in a hadeeth of al-Hasan bin ‘Ali ؓ is that the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say in the Qunoot of witr,[62] “O Allah, guide me among those You have guided,” until the end of the supplication. Here, the narrator did not mention that the Prophet ﷺ taught him to first praise Allah and send prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ, and then to supplicate.

But it is a general principle that one begin supplication with this, for it has been reported that the Prophet ﷺ would begin supplicating by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ, as

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[62] Hasan bin ‘Ali reported, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught me some words that I say during the witr. [The version of ibn Jawwaas is, “I say them in the supplication of the witr.”] They were:

> ‘اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنَا فِيْمَنْ هَدَيْتَ, وَ عَافِنِيْ فِيْمَنْ عَافَيْتَ, وَ تَوَلَّنِيْ فِيْمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ, وَ بَارَكْ لِيْ فِيْمَا أَعْطَيْتَ, وَ قِنِيْ شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ, فَإِنَّكَ تَقْضِيْ وَ لا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ, إِنَّهُ لا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ, وَ لا يَعِزُّ مَنْ عَادَيْتَ, تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَ تَعَالَيْتَ.‘
>
> ‘O Allah, guide me among those You have guided, and pardon me along with those You have pardoned, and be an ally to me along those whome You are an ally to, bless me in what You have bestowed, guard me from the evil of what You have decreed, for You decree and none can decree over You. Indeed he whom You show allegience to is never abased, and he whom You take as an enemy is never honored. Blessed and Exalted are You, our Lord.’”
> [Abu Dawud]

in the khutbatul-haajah,[63] "Verily all praises are for Allah, we praise Him, and ask for His assistance…" until the end of the hadeeth.

And also in the hadeeth of Fudaalah bin 'Ubaid, the Prophet ﷺ heard a man supplicating in his prayer without praising Allah or sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. So the Prophet ﷺ said, "This one has hastened." Then he said, "If anyone amongst you supplicates, let him start by thanking his Lord and praising Him, then send praises upon the Prophet ﷺ, and then let him supplicate with whatever he pleases." [at-Tirmidhi]

This narration and others similar in meaning support the legislation of beginning supplication by thanking and praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. However, in opposition to this is the fact that 'ibaadah[64] is tawqifiyyah,[65] in that nothing can be legislated in it except what Allah and His Messenger ﷺ have legislated. So to say that it has been legislated that one start supplicating in Qunoot by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ necessitates a clear and precise evidence, for there are many supplications with which the Prophet ﷺ supplicated but do not mention praise of Allah nor the prayer upon the Prophet ﷺ, like the supplication in the sujood. It has not reached us that it has been reported in any narration that the Prophet ﷺ said to start by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. Rather, the Prophet ﷺ said, "The closest a servant comes to His Lord is when he is prostrating, so increase in supplication." [Muslim] And

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63 The supplication which the Prophet ﷺ would say before commen-cing any sermon.

64 'Ibaadah (عِبَادَةٌ) linguistically is the utmost extent of humility. ['al-Mufradaat' by ar-Raaghib al-Asfahaani]. In the religious sense, it is a general term which consists all things which Allah loves and is pleased with in speech and action, inner and outer. ['al-'Ubudiyyah' by ibn Taymiyyah]

65 Tawqifiyyah (تَوْقِيفِيَّةٌ) is the concept that nothing can be added to or changed in matters of 'ibaadah.

the Prophet ﷺ also said, "As for the rukoo', magnify your Lord, Mighty and Sublime, and as for the sujood, exert yourselves in supplication, for it is more likely that you will be answered." [Muslim]

It was not mentioned in either hadeeth that one should praise Allah or send prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ in prostration. Also in its like is the supplication recited between the two prostrations, "O Lord, forgive me."[66] It has been related of the Prophet ﷺ that he supplicated by saying, "O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, strengthen me, sustain me, and pardon me."[67] However, it was not mentioned in this narration that he began the supplication by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. It is clear that it is praiseworthy to praise Allah and send prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ in the beginning of supplication, but this a general principle applied only to those supplications made out of a person's own accord. As for legislated supplications which do not begin by praising and thanking Allah, what is closer to the truth is that they should be performed as they have been transmitted. One should not start by thanking and praising Allah and sending praises upon the Prophet ﷺ, because there is no textual evidence suggesting it. However, if one were to do this, we do not know of any harm in that, because he is acting upon the general principle. But I do not know of anyone that has related this of the Prophet ﷺ nor of the Sahaabah in the supplication of Qunoot, so what seems best to me and closer to the evidences is that one should start by supplicating, "O Allah, guide me among those You have guided," as has been related. And we have seen our scholars and teachers, may Allah have mercy on them, begin the supplication of Qunoot with the same in Ramadaan. I do not know to this day of anyone,

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[66] An-Nasaa'i and ibn Maajah related a hadeeth in which Hudhaifah reported that between the two prostrations, the Prophet ﷺ would say, "Rubbighfirlee رَبِّي اغْفِرْ لِيْ," trans.: O Lord, forgive me.

[67] Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, ibn Maajah, and al-Haakim.

whether amongst the people of knowledge or the Sahaabah, who are the best of the creation after the prophets, who had begun the Qunoot in the witr or in a time of calamity by praising Allah and sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. And whoever knows anything giving credence to this, it is legislated for him to act upon it, for whoever has knowledge has a proof against the one who does not.

31. Is it one of the conditions of the supplication that it must be reported to have been said by the Prophet ﷺ? What if one were to add to it?

A person may supplicate with whatever is easy for him, even if it were not reported to have been said by the Prophet ﷺ, for this is not considered a condition in supplication. In this regard, the Prophet ﷺ said when he was teaching ibn Mas'ood the supplication of tashahhud, "...then let him choose a supplication which pleases him and supplicate with it."[68] And in another wording, he ﷺ said, "...then let him choose from his requests what he pleases," without any specification. And in an authentic tradition, the Prophet ﷺ said, "There is no servant who supplicates, in which there is nothing sinful nor breaking of kinship, except that Allah gives him one of three things: either he hastens for him his supplication in this world, they are gathered for him in the afterlife, or Allah turns away from him an equivalent amount of evil." They said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then we shall do plenty of it." He ﷺ said, "Allah is more [plentiful in rewarding]." [at-Tirmidhi]

Here the Prophet ﷺ did not specify any particular supplication. This confirms that this situation has much flexibility, and that a person may choose from those supplications he thinks are suitable

[68] Reported in the end of a hadeeth narrated by an-Nasaa'i Ahmad, and Tabaraani.

to his particular needs.

However, to recite those supplications narrated of the Prophet ﷺ is better, but as far as other needs he is faced with, he should supplicate with whatever is suitable.

32. What is the ruling concerning supplication in a way which rhymes, or lengthening the description of al-Jannah or an-Naar in order to soften the hearts?

I do not know any harm in this as long as it is not done intentionally. As for intentionally making it rhyme, then it is not befitting. In a hadeeth of Haml bin Naabighah al-Hudhli, the Prophet ﷺ dispraised those who made rhymes and said, “This is a rhyme like the rhyme of the soothsayers.” And as for unintentional rhyme, it was present in the speech of the Prophet ﷺ and other righteous people. Therefore, there is no harm in unintentional rhyme if it were in something permissible or performed to give victory to the truth. As for repeating supplications that deal with al-Jannah or an-Naar and thus moving the hearts, it is something desired in the religion.

33. If a supplication of the Prophet ﷺ was reported to have been said in the singular form in the first person,[69] should the Imaam supplicate what has been specifically reported, or can he supplicate in the plural form of the first person [70]?

[69] “I” or “me”.

[70] “We” or “us”.

He should supplicate in the plural form. So he should say, “O Allah, guide *us* among those You have guided,” due to the fact that he is supplicating for himself as well as the believers.

34. When the Imaam pronounces tasleem in the witr, some people stand and perform another rak’ah in order that they may pray it in the last part of the night. What is the ruling concerning this? Is this considered completing the prayer with the Imaam?

We do not know of any harm in this, as the scholars have mentioned, because a person does this in order that he pray the witr at a latter time in the last part of the night. It will be counted as if he stood with the Imaam until he completed the prayer, since in fact he did stand with the Imaam until he turned away, and merely added another rak’ah. He did this in the interest of the religion, in order that the witr be performed in the last part of the night, so there is no harm in this.[71] He is not disqualified from gaining the reward of standing with the Imaam. Although he did not complete it along with him, he did stand with the Imaam until the Imaam completed his prayer; rather he merely delayed it shortly.

35. What is your opinion about the Imaam appointing another person to lead the prayer after the comple-

[71] Jabir bin ‘Abdullah reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “If anyone is afraid that he may not awaken in the latter part of the night, he should observe witr in the first part; and if anyone is eager to get up in the last part of the night, he should observe witr at the end of it, for prayer at the end of the night is witnessed (by the angels), and that is preferable.” [Muslim]

In another hadeeth related by al-Bukhari, ibn ‘Umar said that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Make witr your last prayer at night.”

tion of the Qur'aan in the last part of Ramadaan so that he may perform 'Umrah?

What is apparent to me is that there is much flexibility in this matter rather than rigidity, especially if it is made easy for him to find a righteous Imaam to take his place who is comparable to him or even better. This matter is quite flexible. What I mean is that there is no harm if he chooses for them a righteous Imaam with a nice voice and recitation. However if the Imaam were to hasten in his recitation of the Qur'aan or in its completion causing inconvenience to the congregation so that he may perform 'Umrah, then this is not befitting. What is incumbent is that he should pray a calm prayer in which he finds khushoo', peace at heart, and that he should recite in a way that does not cause inconvenience to the people, even if he were not to perform 'Umrah nor complete the Qur'aan, for this is what is in the general interest of the congregation.

36. What is the ruling concerning the pausing of the Imaam after the recitation of Surah al-Faatihah so that the congregation may recite it as well? If the Imaam did not leave a pause, then when should they recite it?

There is no explicit evidence that supports the legislation of the Imaam leaving a short pause after Surah al-Faatihah so that the congregation may recite it as well in regard to those prayers recited aloud. It is legislated for them to recite it in the different pauses the Imaam makes if he does that. And if this is not easy, they should recite it quietly, even if it were to be when the Imaam is reciting. After this, they should remain quiet and listen to the Imaam. This is due to the general statement made by the Prophet ﷺ, "There is no prayer for the one who does not recite al-

Faatihah," [al-Bukhari, Muslim], as well as his ﷺ saying, "Perhaps you recite behind the Imaam." They said, "Yes." He said, "Do not do that, except if it were the Faatihah, for verily there is no prayer for the one who does not recite it." [Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and ibn Hibbaan with a hasan chain of narration.]

These two hadeeth specify Allah's saying,

﴿وَ إِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوْا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوْا لَهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ﴾

> "So when the Qur'aan is recited, listen to it and be silent that you may receive Mercy."
>
> [Surah al-A'raaf(7):204]

They also specify the saying of the Prophet ﷺ, "The Imaam was only appointed in order that he may be followed, so do not differ with him. So if he says, 'Allahu Akbar', then say 'Allahu Akbar,' and if he recites, then stay quite and listen..." [Saheeh Muslim]

If a person forgets to recite the Faatihah, or was ignorant of its obligation, its obligation does not stand. He is similar to the one who joins the congregation while the Imaam is in rukoo'. He is to make rukoo' with the Imaam, and his rak'ah is valid. This is the correct of the two opinions held by the scholars, and it is the opinion of the majority of the scholars of hadeeth. It has been narrated by Abu Bakrah ath-Thaqafi ﷺ, that once he had entered the masjid while the Prophet ﷺ was in rukoo', so he made rukoo' behind the last row, then entered into it. The Prophet ﷺ said to him after he made tasleem, "May Allah increase you in your desire, but do not do it again," Here, the Prophet ﷺ did not order him to repeat the rak'ah again. [Saheeh al- Bukhari]

As for the Imaam and the person praying alone, [reciting] al-Faatihah is regarded a rukn according to the majority of scholars,

and its obligation does not fall in any way if he is able to recite it.

37. If a person came to a masjid and found the congregation praying Taraaweeh, and he had not yet prayed ‘Ishaa, can he join them in prayer with the niyyah [72] of praying ‘Ishaa?

There is no harm in that one prays with the niyyah of ‘Ishaa with others who are praying Taraaweeh. This is the correct opinion of the two held by the scholars. And once the Imaam pronounces the tasleem, he should stand and complete the remainder of his prayer. It has been reported in al-Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Mu’aadh bin Jabal ﷺ, that he used to pray the ‘Ishaa prayer with the Prophet ﷺ, and then return to his people and lead them in theirs, and the Prophet ﷺ did not object to that.[73] This proves the permissibility of praying an obligatory prayer behind one praying a superogatory one. It has been reported in Saheeh al-Bukhari, that the Prophet ﷺ in some types of the prayer of fear prayed two rak’ah leading one group, and then prayed another two with the next, making tasleem at the end. So the first two raka’aat were considered obligatory for him, while the second was considered superogatory, but obligatory for the congregation.[74]

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[72] The word niyyah (نِيَّة) literally means the heart’s intent. In fiqh, it is that intention which is brought into the person’s heart with which one distinguishes between worship and habit, or between different types of worship.

[73] Jabir ﷺ said, “Mu’aadh ﷺ would pray ‘Ishaa with the Prophet ﷺ, and then proceed to lead his people in prayer.” [Narrated by the six] In another hadeeth in al-Bukhari, Mu’aadh said, “I used to pray the ‘Ishaa prayer with the Prophet ﷺ and then proceed to lead my people in the prayer.”

[74] In a hadeeth related by Ahmad, al-Bukhari, and Muslim, Jabir said: “We were with the Prophet ﷺ during the campaign of Dhat al-Riqa and the prayer was made, and he ﷺ prayed two rak’ah with one group and then they withdrew, and he ﷺ led the other group

38. Is it better to recite the Qur’aan or pray supererogatory prayer in the daytime of Ramadaan?

It is from the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ in Ramadaan that he would increase in different types of worship. Jibreel عليه السلام would revise the Qur’aan with him in the night, and when Jibreel عليه السلام would meet him, he would be more generous than a fast wind.[75] He ﷺ was the most generous of people, but he would be his most generous during Ramadaan. He would increase in prayer, spending for the sake of Allah, recitation of the Qur’aan, helping others, dhikr,[76] and i’tikaaf.[77] This is the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ in this blessed month. As for the comparison between recitation and prayer, this differs in regards to the different conditions of the people, and its exact reward is with Allah عز وجل, for he is All-Encompassing in knowledge.

39. Is it better to recite the Qur’aan, or to listen to its recitation by way of prerecorded cassettes?

What is best is that one does what is more beneficial to one’s heart and what has more effect, because what is sought is that one should contemplate, comprehend, and act according to the Book of Allah, as Allah عز وجل says in the Qur’aan,

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in two rak’ah. The Prophet ﷺ prayed four raka’aat and the people prayed two raka’aat.”

[75] See footnote #27.

[76] The word dhikr (ذِكْرٌ) literally means to mention, and in religious terms it is the mentioning and remembering of Allah through various legislated means.

[77] The word i’tikaaf (إِعْتِكَافٌ) in the religious sense is to devote oneself to Allah by staying inside a masjid as a means of worship.

﴿كِتَـٰبٌ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ مُبَـٰرَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوْا ءَايَـٰتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُوْلُواْ الأَلْبَـٰبِ﴾

"A Blessed Book which we have sent down to you to ponder its verses and to remind those of understanding."

[Surah as-Saad(38):29]

And Allah, ﷻ, said,

﴿إِنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ أَقْوَمُ﴾

"Verily this Qur'aan guides to what is most

best and right…"

[Surah al-Israa'(17):9]

And He said, ﷻ,

﴿قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا هُدَىً وَ شِفَاءٌ﴾

"Say: It [the Qur'aan] is a Guidance and a Cure for those who believe."

[Surah al-Fussilat(41):44]